

Royal Mail International Update

February 2020

This update, about incidents which have affected international mail services throughout February, was issued by Royal Mail Customer Services on Monday 2 March 2020.

Information about issues currently affecting the movement of international mail, including international bank holidays, can be found at: www.royalmail.com/internationalupdates.

Africa

Libya

Start date: 16 July 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Libya are currently suspended until further notice.

South Africa

Start date: 1 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

Very poor service has been observed for mail into South Africa. South Africa Post Office has advised this is due to abnormally high volumes of mail.

This has created bottlenecks in their processing locations due to space constraints and processing capacity. The communicated recovery plan expected at the end of October does not look to have resolved the issues and with the peak Christmas volumes, this is likely to increase delays. Delays are approximately 35 days.

Asia

China

Start date: 28 January 2020

End date: Ongoing

Items leaving the UK for China

We are maintaining our services to China. However, the emergency associated with the Coronavirus has reduced the air capacity available in the market and impacted our (and other carriers') ability to convey all items to China for delivery in the usual manner and timescales.

Royal Mail is working hard with our partners to secure alternative air capacity so we can continue running our services to China, despite many other international postal operators having suspended their China service altogether.

We continue to collect and process items bound for China. In the event traffic received is greater than the daily available air capacity we will hold items on site in HWDC and forward them for transit to China on the next available flight.



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China continued...

Delays to deliveries in China

As a result of reduced air capacity and emergency delivery procedures being taken to contain the virus on the ground in China, it is inevitable that customers sending items to China are likely to experience delays to delivery.

For international mail (letters, parcels and Express Mail Service items) China Post are contacting the recipient by phone, before delivery, to agree a delivery preference. The recipient has the option for mail to be stored temporarily at the postal outlet, made available for pick-up from the outlet, or delivered to a smart parcel locker or via other non-face-to-face methods. As result of this process, delays are to be expected for inbound international mail to these areas of China.

Impact to items leaving China for delivery in the UK

We are processing items from China for delivery in the UK as usual, though the transit of mail across and through China is affected. A number of international airlines have suspended flights to mainland China, and some border ports in neighbouring countries are also temporarily closed. China Post will temporarily store affected transit mail (air and surface) and will transport it to the destination countries when these transport options are once again available. Delays should be expected in transport and delivery during this period.

As previously advised by the World Health Organization, coronaviruses do not survive for long on objects. It is therefore safe to receive postal items from China, without risk of contracting the new coronavirus. Measures have nevertheless been implemented to ensure the safety of mail processing and postal staff across China.

Hong Kong

Start date: 28 January 2020

End date: Ongoing

Hong Kong Post has informed us that due to measures taken by the government since Tuesday 28 January 2020 to reduce the risk of the spread of the Coronavirus (2019-nCoV), all inbound and outbound mail processing (letter-post, parcel-post and EMS items) are subject to disruption.

Indonesia

Start date: 30 January 2020

End date: Ongoing

Indonesia Post has informed us the customs clearance process is expected to be delayed as result of changes to the De Minimis Exemption on shipments imported into Indonesia, effective from 30 January 2020 when the De Minimis Threshold will be reduced.

As a result, delays are to be expected in the processing and delivery of letter-post, parcel-post and EMS items containing goods.

Macao

Start date: 30 January 2020

End date: 16 February 2020

Macao Post has advised in order to minimize the spread of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), the Macao Government has announced that all civil servants, other than those working for emergency and critical services, will remain exempted from working from 8-16 February 2020.

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Syria

Start date: 6 December 2012

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Syria are suspended until further notice.

Australasia

No service-affecting incidents reported.

Europe

European Services

Start date: 28 November 2019

End date: Ongoing

French lorry drivers and the National Road Transport Organisation has announced a roadblock at the French-Belgian Border on 28 November 2019 to protest the French Government's decision to reduce tax relief on commercial diesel fuel. As a result, this affected UK outbound mail between France and the Belgian border, and mail transiting through Belgium with delays of up to 24 hours

European Services

Start date: 8 February 2020

End date: 18 February 2020

High winds closed the Port of Dover over the weekend until Monday afternoon, which resulted in high demand for the channel tunnel, which lead to extended check-in times.

This may result in despatches to the following countries experiencing a delay of up to 24-hours: France, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Luxembourg, Poland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden.

Italy – Incident 1

Start date: 1 February 2017

End date: Ongoing

We have become aware of processing delays on all inbound international traffic arriving in Italy.

To reflect the current transit times, we are temporarily extending our delivery aims as follows:

Untracked products: 6-8 working days; Tracked products: 4-6 working days and Tracked and Signed For products: 5-7 working days.

Italy – Incident 2

Start date: 22 February 2020

End date: Ongoing

Poste Italiane has stated in order to minimize the spread of the novel coronavirus following the recent cases in the area and in compliance with a Ministerial order, mail deliveries and collections have been suspended in the following postcode areas: 26814, 26821, 26822, 26823, 26826, 26827, 26828, 26841, 26842, 26843, 26844, 26845, 26846, 26847, 26848, 26849, 26856, 26861, 26862, 26863, 26864, 26865, 26867 and 35030.

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Norway

Start date: 1 August 2018

End date: Ongoing

Norwegian Post has confirmed their International Mail Hub due is continuing to experience delays following modernisation.

Although there have been improvements, a proportion of Tracked mail is still experiencing delays daily. Norwegian Post has confirmed further enhancement activities are planned for processing improvements.

Poland

Start date: 14 February 2020

End date: 10 March 2020

We've been informed the International Mail Centre in Warsaw is relocating between 17-19 February 2020. As a result, delays to mail posted to and from Poland can be expected until 10 March 2020.

Slovakia

Start date: 13 February 2020

End date: 14 February 2020

Following a security incident there was restriction on operations at the International Mail Hub on Thursday 13 February. As a result, almost all despatches which arrived on Thursday were delayed. As of Friday 14 February, the mail hub is back to normal but is dealing with double the volume of mail, so delays are still possible.

Sweden

Start date: November 2017

End date: Ongoing

Delivery scanning of 'Tracked' has improved in recent months, however, it still isn't where it's expected to be and we'd recommend customers use Tracked & Signed services to Sweden for more reliable tracking information.

Ukraine (Crimea & Sevastapol)

Start date: 18 March 2014

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Crimea and Sevastapol are suspended until further notice.

Latin America & Caribbean

Brazil

Start date: 16 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

We've been advised that there are currently delays with mail into Brazil. We believe this may be due to industrial action, however this is yet to be confirmed. However, what we can say is that any mail posted in the last 5-7 days could be in a backlog and any mail affected may experience at least a 10-day delay from posting to delivery.

We are taking steps to re-route where possible and expect any new postings from the end of this week to be clear of the backlog but could still be subject to some delay in delivery of 3 days or more.

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El Salvador

Start date: 17 February 2020

End date: 28 February 2020

Our carrier was unable to accept any mail for El Salvador for a short period, and any mail for this destination was held until service resumed on the 28 February, some delays are likely as a result.

Martinique

Start date: 13 January 2020

End date: 21 February 2020

A major strike affected the collection and the delivery of all mail services for over a month. Although service resumed on the 21 February, delays are likely until any backlog of mail is cleared.

Venezuela

Start date: 4 July 2017

End date: Ongoing

The local situation has disrupted mail flows into Venezuela and our supplier has had to stop delivering mail into Venezuela. As a result, we can no longer accept any mail for Venezuela, any mail on hand will be returned to sender.

Middle East

Israel

Start date: 13 February 2020

End date: 29 February 2020

Israel Post were dealing with mail backlogs as a result of an unforeseen increase in volumes. They're processing items as quickly as possible and expected normal service to resume by the end of February. As a result, delays to mail services were expected.

Yemen

Start date: 27 March 2015

End date: Ongoing

Mail services to Yemen are currently suspended until further notice.

North America (USA & Canada)

Canada – Incident 1

Start date: 9 October 2017

End date: Ongoing

What's the issue?

Canada Post are experiencing delays to delivery services due to high volumes of incoming mail. Delivery aims for Royal Mail services for Canada are normally 5-7 working day, however, International Standard and International Tracked & Signed are severely delayed, taking 3-4 weeks to be delivered.

What alternative is there?

If you have been posting using our Royal Mail 'Tracked and Signed service', we highly recommend you use our 'Tracked service' option which is providing much speedier processing and delivery times. Simply select the correct service and label. If you are not set up on our Tracked service, please talk to your usual Royal Mail contact who will help you with the next steps. Finally, for our Customers using the Post Office to send your items, simply ask for a "Tracked service" at the counter.

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North America (USA & Canada)

Canada continued...

A note about Customs in Canada

Whilst Customs clearing processing times are totally outside our control, it is worth remembering that Canada is one of the countries with the lowest de-minimis of 20 Canadian Dollars (circa £11). This means that any goods equal or above that value will systematically go through a clearance process thus creating additional delays. Most of what our customers send is under DDU (Delivered Duty Unpaid) meaning that the recipient is responsible to pay any duty or taxes. Read more on our country guide [page royalmail.com/canada](http://royalmail.com/canada), thank you.

Canada – Incident 2

Start date: 17 January 2020

End date: 7 February 2020

Following heavy snowfall, the city of St. John, Newfoundland declared a state of emergency with all businesses to remain closed and all residents to stay at home. The St. John Mail processing and distribution centre were closed from the 17 January. Normal service resumed on the 7 Feb.

Other

Ascension Islands/Saint Helena

Start date: 6 February 2018

End date: Ongoing

Air transportation to the Ascension Islands/St Helena is currently reduced due to ongoing runway work. Unfortunately, given the location of the countries, there is no viable alternative which would arrive any earlier. Although, customers can continue to send mail there will be significant delays in the delivery of all products. Please note: Mail to the Falkland Island is not affected.

Help and advice

More information about Royal Mail's international products and services is available on our [royalmail.com/international pages](http://royalmail.com/international_pages). Alternatively, if you're a business customer you can contact your usual Royal Mail service contact or call our dedicated Business Centre on 08457 950950. If you're a residential customer, you'll need to call 03457 740740.

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